

## 4.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA requires that an EIR contain an assessment of the cumulative impacts which may be associated with the project. This assessment involves examining project related effects on the environment in the context of similar effects which have been caused by past or existing projects and the anticipated effects of foreseeable future projects. Although project-related impacts may be individually minor, the cumulative effects of these impacts, in combination with the impacts of other projects, may be significant under CEQA and must be addressed.

One exception to the above discussion exists in CEQA. Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines makes special provisions on cumulative effects for projects that are consistent with an adopted Community Plan, General Plan or zoning, provided certain criteria are met. In an effort to reduce the need to prepare repetitive environmental studies, CEQA mandates that projects which are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an EIR was certified shall not require additional environmental review, except as might be necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site.

Section 15183 directs the public agency to limit its examination of environmental effects which are peculiar to the project or parcel, were not analyzed in the prior EIR, are potentially significant off site or cumulative which were not discussed in the EIR prepared for the general plan, community plan or zoning action, or were previously identified as significant and as a result of substantial new information which was not known at the time the EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the prior EIR.

Previously approved land use documents such as general plans, specific plans, and local coastal plans may be used in cumulative impact analysis. A pertinent discussion of cumulative impacts contained in one or more previously certified EIRs may be incorporated by reference pursuant to the provisions for tiering and program EIRs. No further cumulative impacts analysis is required when a project is consistent with a general, specific, master or comparable programmatic plan where the lead agency determines that the regional or area-wide cumulative impacts of the proposed project have already been adequately addressed, as defined in section 15152(f), in a certified EIR for that plan.

If a cumulative impact was adequately addressed in a prior EIR for a community plan, zoning action, or general plan, and the project is consistent with that plan or action, then an EIR for such a project should not further analyze that cumulative impact, as provided in Section 15183(j).

### 4.1 Prior EIRs Consistent with Section 15183 of the State CEQA Guidelines

In 1990, the Placer County Board of Supervisors certified and adopted an EIR for the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan. This plan was designed to meet the specific requirements of Government Code Section 65000 et seq. as specifically stated on page 1 of the plan. A draft and final EIR, as required by CEQA were prepared and adopted for the Community Plan. The final EIR identified several significant environmental effects of the project that, even after specific mitigation, would still result in a significant impact to the environment. The EIR for the Dry

Creek – West Placer Community Plan is hereby incorporated in this document by reference and is available at in the office of the Placer County Planning Department (Placer County 1990).

In adopting the community plan and certifying the EIR, the Placer County Board of Supervisors identified several significant effects and made findings and overriding considerations.

Overriding findings were made for the following significant impacts:

- There will be a substantial increase in population within the Plan area. (Dry Creek - West Placer DEIR, page 4-1.)
- Adoption of the plan will result in increased traffic volumes that are deemed significant and unavoidable on a regional basis. (DEIR, page 5-28.)
- Adoption of the plan will result in additions to an existing region-wide air quality non-attainment situation including additional vehicular emissions in both the plan area and air basin. (DEIR, page 6-3.)
- There will be an increase in run-off and the plan will cumulatively and incrementally add to regional flooding concerns. (DEIR, page 9-3.)
- Adoption of the Plan could degrade the surface and sub-surface water quality due to increased contamination from agricultural pesticides and wastes, from erosion and sedimentation within drainageways, run-off from developed areas and septic tank effluent. (DEIR, page 102.)
- Implementation of the Dry Creek - West Placer Community Plan will result in loss and conversion of agricultural lands, riparian and woodlands, and wetlands. (DEIR, page 10-07 and 10-8.)

In adopting Overriding considerations, the Placer County Board of Supervisors expressed that they had made reasonable and good faith efforts to mitigate potential impacts resulting from the Dry Creek - West Placer Community Plan. The Board adopted numerous policies, goals, standards, and guidelines to substantially mitigate or eliminate potential impacts. Changes and alterations were made to the adopted text and land use designations of the plan to specifically lessen or avoid significant environmental impacts identified in the EIR. Additionally, the Board adopted a Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Plan which outlines how the mitigation measures adopted as part of the Plan will be implemented, monitored, and evaluated. As required by Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Board of Supervisors found that the benefits of approving the project outweighed the unmitigated adverse environmental impacts.

## **4.2 Effects of Other Local and Regional Projects**

For the cumulative analysis of the proposed Whisper Creek project, cumulative conditions were assumed to be those identified in the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan EIR. The community plan calls for the development of between 4,215 and 5,479 dwelling units depending on various scenarios. Since the adoption of the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan numerous projects have been approved or are currently being considered within the plan area that are consistent with the Community Plan and development policies contained therein. These projects represent the development of more than 2,100 dwelling units. Within the community

plan area the 104 dwelling units represented by this project contribute to the cumulative impacts though at a level that is not significant to any singular impact or issue.

Regionally, the cumulative effects of the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan were considered in conjunction with several other large scale development proposals including the North Roseville Specific Plan, North Central Roseville Specific plan, the Antelope Urban Study Area, the South Sutter County Land Use Development Study and the Willowbrook Ranch development. Together these projects represented a minimum of approximately 20,000 dwelling units along with a commensurate amount of associated commercial/service oriented land uses and as a significant amount of industrial land in the South Sutter County Plan (Sutter County 1996).

Since the adoption of the Community Plan several other large scale development proposals have come forth as applications or in discussions including the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, the West Roseville Specific Plan, Placer Ranch, the Regional University and Community project, a revised South Sutter County, Curry Creek Community Plan, Placer Ranch, Creekview Specific Plan, and the Sierra Vista Specific Plan. A more complete description of the plans follows:

- **Placer Vineyards Specific Plan:** The Placer Vineyards Specific Plan project is a mixed-use master planned community with residential, employment, commercial, open space, recreational and public/quasi-public land uses. The Plan provides for 14,132 homes in a range of housing types, styles, and densities. At Plan build out, projected to occur over a 20 to 30-year time frame, Placer Vineyards will have a population of approximately 33,000 people, 422.5 acres of employment centers, 140 acres of retail commercial centers and approximately 930 acres of new parks and open space.
- **South Sutter County Industrial-Commercial Reserve (Sutter County):** In 2002, Sutter County adopted a Specific Plan for approximately 3,500 acres of the Industrial-Commercial Reserve area. Adoption of the Specific Plan was invalidated in 2003 following litigation. However, the area is still designated Industrial-Commercial Reserve in the Sutter County General Plan, and the County is considering other development options for the area, including the development of 2,700 acres controlled by Lennar Communities within the Industrial-Commercial Reserve. The original Specific Plan was divided into three phases, which included the following time frames and land use designations: Phase I (2002-2009), 1,230 acres of industrial uses; Phase II (2009-2019), 1,114 acres of mixed commercial uses and industrial uses; Phase III (2019-2022), 1,148 acres of industrial uses. The South Sutter County Specific Plan included no areas designated for residential development.
- **Elverta Specific Plan (Sacramento County):** The Elverta Specific Plan area encompasses approximately 1,744 acres and the following proposed land use designations: 880.3 acres of urban residential uses and 551.8 acres of agricultural-residential uses with a total holding capacity of up to 4,950 units; 15 acres of commercial uses; 4.4 acres of office/professional uses; 20.2 acres of school uses; 73.3 acres of park uses; 18.4 acres (former landfill site) to be designated as open space; and 191.9 acres to be used for drainageways, detention facilities, trails, powerline corridor and major roads (Sacramento County 2006).

- **West Roseville Specific Plan (City of Roseville):** The West Roseville Specific Plan area includes approximately 3,100 acres. Planned land uses include approximately 8,430 dwelling units and 2.2 million square feet of non-residential uses (City of Roseville 2004).
- **Regional University and Community Specific Plan:** The 1,100 acre site for this proposed development is located between the West Roseville Specific Plan area and Brewer Road, about 2 miles north of Baseline Road. A formal development proposal was originally submitted to Placer County for a project that includes a 6,000 student university plus a 1,200 student high school on 600 acres, and an adjoining 500 acre mixed-use community with 2,342 dwelling units and 73 acres of commercial uses. A draft Specific Plan is currently under review by Placer County.
- **Riolo Vineyards:** This proposed project site is to the west of Walerga Road and north of PFE Road. This proposed development would consist of 805 residential units on 319 acres and would include a variety of residential densities as well as parks and open space.
- **Placer Ranch:** This project proposes the adoption of a Specific Plan and approval of related entitlements allowing for the phase development of a mixture of industrial, commercial, office and professional, residential and educational land uses on approximately  $\pm 2,213$  acres. The project proposes approximately 6,700 dwelling units (including campus housing), approximately 290 acres for a university, approximately 9,612,000 institutional (education, parks, and open space) land uses.
- **Creekview Specific Plan:** This is a  $\pm 570$  acre specific plan area located west of the City of Roseville, generally northwest of the West Roseville Specific Plan and north of the Whisper Creek proposed project. This plan is being drafted for the City of Roseville.
- **Sierra Vista Specific Plan:** This is a  $\pm 2,000$  acre specific plan area located west of the City of Roseville, generally south of the West Roseville Specific Plan and northwest of the Whisper Creek proposed project. This plan is being drafted for the City of Roseville.

The Placer County Board of Supervisors has discussed preparation of a “Curry Creek Community Plan” that would generally encompass the Regional University site and the area between that site and the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area. However, there hasn’t been a decision to proceed with such a plan, and any assumptions regarding such a plan are too speculative to include at this time.

### 4.3 Assessment of Cumulative Impacts

In compliance with Section 15183 of the CEQA cumulative effects relating to runoff and flooding; population increase; loss of agricultural lands, riparian and woodlands, and wetlands; and degradation of surface and sub-surface water quality due to increased contamination from agricultural pesticides and wastes, from erosion and sedimentation do not need to be discussed further.

Three additional cumulative impacts of the project are described in the following paragraphs:

### 4.3.1 Aesthetics

Continued development in western Placer and northern Sacramento counties will lead to an increase of light and glare. Although project-specific impacts will be mitigated through lighting design mitigation measures, the continued addition of more forms of night lighting will lead to the spread and intensification of the already present “sky glow” that blocks out views of the night sky. Regionally, this is considered a significant and unmitigable cumulative impact. However, the project’s contribution to the impact is not considered cumulatively significant because the increased light and glare that would be generated by the proposed 104 unit subdivision is statistically insignificant when compared to the light and glare generated by the tens of thousands of existing and proposed residences, as well as the lighting associated with the significant non-residential development proposed by the projects listed above.

### 4.3.2 Air Quality

As discussed in the Air Quality section (Section 3.5), long-term air quality impacts are associated with the operational characteristics of the project after build out, and typically are the result of mobile emissions related to employee trips to work and home, the use of non-electric landscaping equipment in residential areas, and the use of equipment that directly generates pollutants (i.e. diesel powered water pump or electrical generators). The expected project emissions from these sources are below the PCAPCD’s daily 82 lbs./day thresholds. However the PCAPCD considers long-term operational emissions greater than 10 lbs/day of ROG and/or NO<sub>x</sub> as cumulatively significant when considered with emissions from other current and expected projects in the area. The emissions of ozone precursors (NO<sub>x</sub> and ROG) are of particular concern due to the region being classified as “serious non-attainment” for the federal eight-hour ozone standard.

The PCAPCD has established operational mitigation measures that can reduce emissions from the subdivision after residences are constructed and occupied. The following mitigation shall be implemented to reduce long term emissions of ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> to a level that would be less than cumulatively considerable and less than significant:

#### **Mitigation Measure 4.3-1:**

1. Only natural gas/propane fired, fireplace appliances are allowed.
2. The project shall implement an offsite mitigation program, coordinated through the Placer County Air Pollution Control District, to offset the project’s long-term ozone precursor and PM10 emissions. The applicant’s mitigation program must be approved by the Placer County Air Pollution Control District. In lieu of this project implementing its own offsite mitigation program, the applicant can choose to pay an equivalent amount of money into the PCAPCD's Offsite Mitigation Program. The District provides monetary incentives to sources of air pollutant emissions within the projects general vicinities that are not required by law to reduce their emissions. Therefore, the emission reductions are real, quantifiable and implement provisions of the 1994 State Implementation Plan. The off-site mitigation program has been implemented by a number of projects in Placer County and is considered a feasible mitigation measure for this project to implement.

3. HVAC units shall be equipped with PremAir (or other manufacturer) catalyst system if available and economically feasible at the time building permits are issued. The PremAir catalyst can convert up to 70% of ground level ozone that passes over the condenser coils into oxygen. The PremAir system is considered feasible if the additional cost is less than 10 percent of the base HVAC system.

4. Open burning shall be prohibited through CC&Rs on all lots.

### 4.3.3 Transportation/Traffic

Under both the near-term and future (Year 2025) scenarios, the project alone would not result in a significant impact to transportation/traffic due to the limited number of additional trips generated by the development of 104 single-family residential homes. However, the project's incremental increase in traffic could potentially result in impacts to the Dry Creek/West Placer Community area traffic, contributing to the need for Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects as identified in the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan. Because the project's cumulative impacts to traffic are consistent with the Community Plan assumptions, impacts have been addressed by, and would be partially mitigated by the payment of traffic impact fees as specified in the Placer County Code. With the payment of these fees as required by ordinance and consistent with the Community Plan, cumulative impacts to transportation and traffic would be considered less than significant.

<b>Impact 4.3-2:</b>	Implementation of the Whisper Creek Subdivision would generate vehicle trips related to residents under long-term Future (Year 2025) Cumulative background conditions that would be cumulatively considerable.
<b>Significance:</b>	Potentially Significant
<b>Mitigation Measures:</b>	Mitigation Measure 4.3-2. The project will be subject to the payment of traffic impact fees that are in effect in the Dry Creek Fee District, pursuant to applicable Ordinances and Resolutions. Traffic mitigation fee(s) will be required and shall be paid to the Placer County Department of Public Works prior to issuance of any Building Permits for the project.
<b>Significance after Mitigation:</b>	Less than Significant

## 4.4 Conclusion

The other projects in the region represent the development of tens of thousands of new residences and the urbanization of over 15,000 acres. When considered along with these other projects, the individual impacts of the proposed Whisper Creek project with 104 dwelling units on ±60.6 acres become cumulatively insignificant.